

TO: Public Health Committee
FROM: Michael E. Opalak, M.D., F.A.C.S.
DATE: Wednesday, March 20, 2013
**RE: H.B. 6645 "An Act Concerning Compassionate Aid in
Dying for Terminally Ill Patients"**

**Please accept the attached letter as my written testimony in
opposition to H.B. 6645.**

Thank you.

Michael E. Opalak, M.D.

Daniel E. Nijensohn, M.D., P.C.
Michael E. Opalak, M.D., P.C.
Patrick P. Mastroianni, M.D., P.C.
Steven Sweitzer, P.A.C.

MICHAEL E. OPALAK, M.D., F.A.C.S.
NEUROLOGICAL SURGERY
Diplomate, American Board of Neurological Surgery

February 25, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you in a very important matter for all physicians, i.e. the consideration of physician assisted suicide.

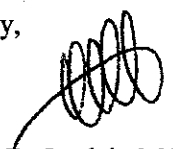
It seems to me that back in the late 1940's we hanged a whole series of German doctors for doing acts that everybody recognized were in violation of the guiding spirits that have been the lode star of medicine throughout the ages.

I cannot be the only physician who remembers very clearly, having sworn the Hippocratic Oath in its classical form, i.e. starting with "I swear by Apollo Aesculap", etc. It seems to me that the fourth paragraph was very clear, "I will neither give a deadly drug to anyone it asked for it nor will I make a suggestion to this effect. Purity and holiness will guide my life and my art".

A very clear memory from my residency has stuck with me throughout the years. A 90-year-old man with a broken neck paralyzed on a ventilator was in our care. My chief resident, after a week, told me to impart to this gentleman just how hopeless the situation was and that we were going to make him comfortable and take out his ventilator tube. I accomplished my mission at the end of which this patient with terrified eyes mouthed around his ET tube "but I want to live".

It is not of our perview to be given the green light by any entity to allow us to violate our Hippocratic Oath.

Sincerely,



Michael E. Opalak, M.D.

MEO/ap

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